Price rise due to spurt in share market

†2316. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite the unprecedented rise in share market, there is increase of nearly 20 per cent in the price of food stuff (Thali) for common man in the country;

(b) whether Government are going to take any measures to check the inflation and to provide food to all; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) to (c) There is no direct relationship between the rise in share market and the rise in the food prices. Annual inflation rate based on the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) for the week ending February 18, 2006 for food grains was 7.26 per cent as against 1.29 per cent in the corresponding week of last year (week ending February 19, 2005).

Government is concerned about the price increase of various essential commodities and undertakes measures as may be required to contain the same. The anti-inflationary policies of the government in the recent past included fiscal and monetary discipline; rationalization of excise and import duties to lighten the burden on the poor; freeze on central issue prices under the targeted public distribution system (TDDS) for wheat and rice; import of wheat to augment supply in the Southern zone; and regular monitoring of retail and wholesale prices of essential commodities.

Levy of surcharge on Income Tax for Gujarat earthquake

2317. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) how much amount has been collected by Government by levy of surcharge on income tax for Gujarat earthquake;

(b) how much amount has been disbursed to Gujarat out of the collected surcharge;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.